GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:453
ANSWERED ON:18.04.2001
REVIEW OF FAMILY WELFARE PROGRAMMES
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Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the family welfare programmes recently in the country;

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the future plan chalked out by the Government to implement the family welfare programmes effectively in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) to (c): A statement is laid on the table of the Lok Sabha.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 453 FOR 18.4.2001

(a)to(c): The implementation of the National Family Welfare Programme is reviewed very frequently. As a result of these the ongoing vertical programmes like Maternal and Child Health, Universal Immunization Programme, Child Survival and Safe Motherhood were all combined in a holistic, integrated programme of Reproductive and Child Health (RCH), launched in 1997.

Centrally defined, method specific targets were replaced by a community based need assessment approach together with de-centralized planning and implementation that will enable us to address these identified needs. This constituted a paradigm shift in the national family welfare programme. It has served to raise levels of awareness as well as expectations.

The Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare as well as Secretary, Department of Family Welfare have periodically reviewed with the State Health Ministers and Secretaries in charge of Family Welfare of States, the State specific implementation and performance of family welfare programme.

The implementation of the national family welfare programme in the demographically weaker States is being reviewed by a Committee of Secretaries under the Chairmanship of Cabinet Secretary.

A number of steps have been taken to strengthen the policy as well as the institutional framework for implementing the national family welfare programme.

The National Population Policy, 2000 adopted in February, 2000 provides a policy framework for advancing goals and prioritizing strategies during the next decade, to meet the reproductive and child health needs of people of India. It seeks to simultaneously address the issues of child survival, maternal health, and contraception, while increasing the outreach and coverage of a comprehensive package of reproductive and child health services in partnership with the voluntary sector, the non-government sector, the private corporate sector and the community.

The National Population Policy, 2000 recommended the constitution of the following bodies:

(i) National Commission on Population.
(ii) State/UT Commission on Population.

The National Commission on Population was constituted on 11th May, 2000 under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister to oversee and review the implementation of the inter-sectoral and inter-Ministerial Agenda of the National Population Policy. The first meeting of the Commission was held on 22nd July, 2000.

State/UT Population Commissions have been constituted in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, A&N Island and Lakshadweep. Many other States have informed that they are in the process of constituting this Body.
There are significant inter-State differences in the demographic transition among the 32 States and UTs. The National Population Policy, 2000 recommended that focussed attention be paid to national family welfare programme in the demographically weaker

States. At the first meeting of the National Commission on Population, Prime Minister announced the formation of an Empowered Action Group within the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for paying focussed attention to the demographically weaker States with deficient national socio-demographic indices. Accordingly, an Empowered Action Group (EAG) has been constituted and notified in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, for providing focussed attention to Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Orissa, Uttaranchal, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

The terms of reference of the EAG are very comprehensive:

(i) To formulate programmes aimed at achieving the socio-demographic goals enumerated in the National Population Policy, 2000 in the areas/States that have been lagging behind in containing population growth.

(ii) To assist the concerned State Governments in achieving the goals set in their State Population Policy.

(iii) To devise ways to meaningful involvement of voluntary association, community organisations and panchayati raj institutions.

(iv) To explore the possibility of expanding the scope of social marketing of contraceptives in a manner that make them easilyaccessible even while raising awareness levels.

Addressing the first meeting on the National Commission on Population on 22nd July, 2000, the Prime Minister has also announced that a National Population Stabilization fund would be set up with an initial contribution of Rs.100 crore by the Government of India, to specially support projects designed to help population stabilisation and to provide a window for canalizing voluntary contribution from individuals, industries, trade organisations, etc. in furtherance of this national cause. A Society has been registered. The Ministry of Finance has contributed Rs.50 crore as seed money for Population Stabilisation Fund.

Further, specific steps have been taken to strengthen the implementation of the National Population Policy, 2000.

As part of the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Strategy in tune with the reproductive and child health programme, the services of private professional agencies for creating audio-visual and visual software, designing advertising compaign by the mass-media have been taken up. Further, IEC components of the family planning of the Family Welfare Department has now been decentralized to the district level and the District IEC Plan is approved only as per the suggestions of the Zila Saksharata Samiti (ZSS). The ZSS is fully empowered to suggest IEC interventions as per the rural lingua, idioms and needs.

A national strategy for social marketing of supplies and services is on the anvil. This will provide a framework for disseminating health products and services in partnership with the voluntary sector, non-government organisations, social marketing organisations, the private corporate sector, Government, panchayati raj institutions and the community with the following objectives:-

(i) actively promote the acceptability and adoption of social beneficial health behaviors, products and services.

(ii) Improve equity of access to and availability of a wide range of health information, products and services in both urban and rural areas.

(iii) Sustain the increase in total contraceptive use, especially spacing methods among all segments of the population.

The Mahila Swasthya Sangh and the Village Self-Help Groups are being increasingly used to disseminate agenda of family welfare in the villages. Although, these bodies do not strictly come within the system of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), however, vigilant and active members of the village are often represented both on PRIs and in such bodies.

A series of Family Welfare and Health Melas have been held at Mathura, Delhi, Kargil, Patna and Lucknow during the year 2000-2001 to provides convergence of a wide range of health and family welfare services at one place and time. These Health Melas are gaining in popularity. These serves to address the unmet needs among different segments of the population.

In order to implement various strategies in the National Population Policy, 2000, an Annual Action Plan has been prepared and is being implemented from August, 2000 to August, 2001.

The Chairman, National Commission on Population had a meeting with the Chief Secretaries/Family Welfare Secretaries of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhatishgarh and Uttaranchal to take stock of the implementation of the National Population Policy, 2000, in these States. During the meeting, presentations were made by the representatives of these States highlighting the crucial areas of concern. The State Governments have been asked to prepare firm and detailed action plan taking into account the ground realities and their area specific problems (region wise/district wise) for achieving the short/medium/long term goals as envisaged in the National Population Policy, 2000, adopted by the Government of India.